



CSESA

The Center on Secondary Education for
Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Peer and Social Component: Peer-Mediated Strategies

STRAND: Educational Strategies and Interventions for High
School Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders

About CSESA

- * Research & Development Center
- * Funded by the Department of Education (IES)
- * Purpose: To conduct a program of research to develop & evaluate a comprehensive, school-based intervention program for secondary students with ASD. The ultimate objective of the Center is to improve the cognitive, communicative, academic, social, behavioral, functional, or transition outcomes of secondary students with ASD.”

**FOR YOUR SUBJECTS
WHEN THEY GRADUATE:**

- 1) SOMETHING TO DO**
- 2) SOMEWHERE TO BE**
- 3) SOMEONE TO LOVE.**

GOOD LUCK!!

CSESA Sites



**SAN DIEGO STATE
UNIVERSITY**



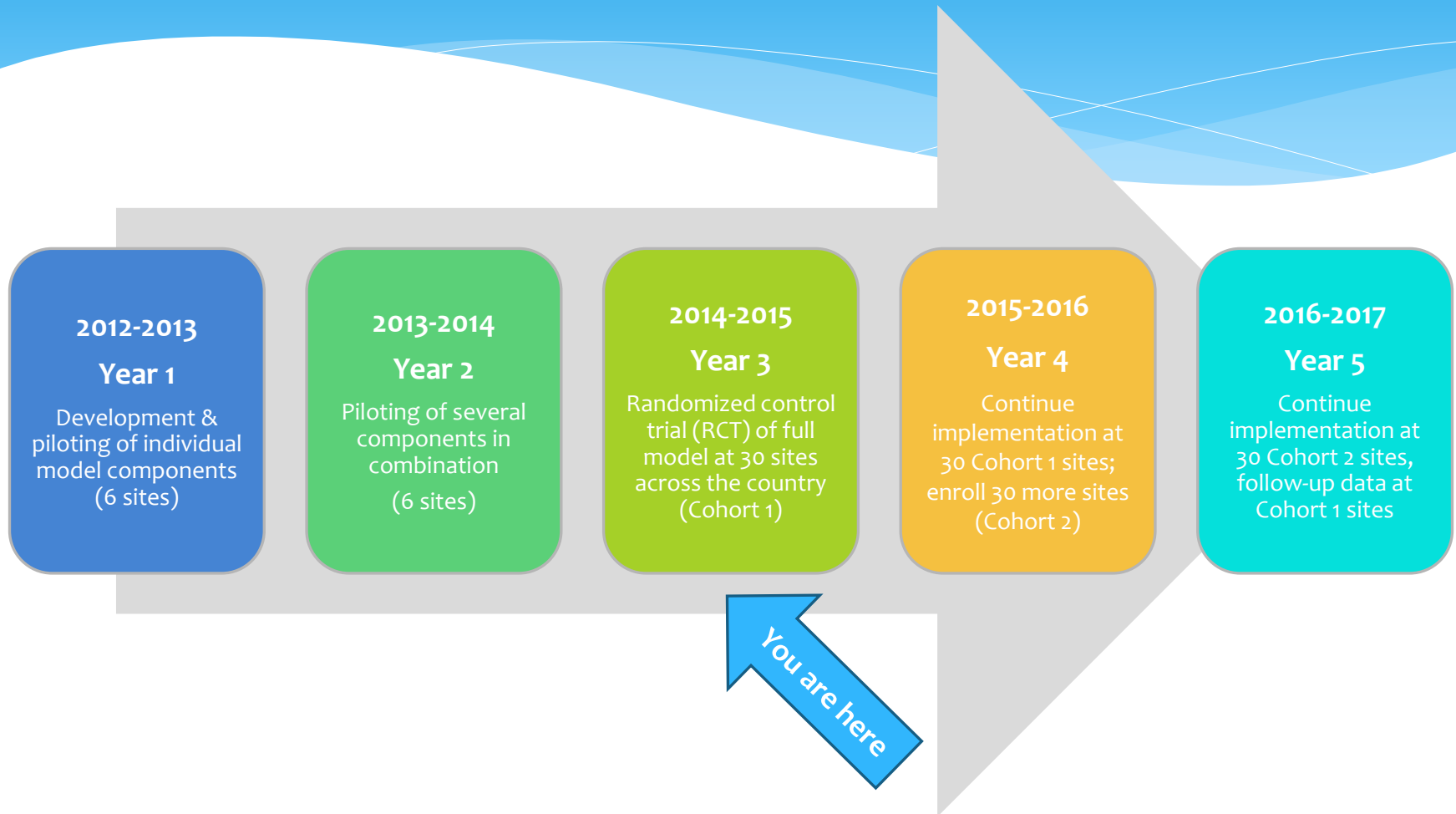
UNC
**FRANK PORTER GRAHAM
CHILD DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE**

UCDAVIS
MIND INSTITUTE

THE UNIVERSITY OF
TEXAS
AT AUSTIN



The Big Picture



CSESA Process

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Training and Coaching

ASSESSMENT

School & Student

PLANNING

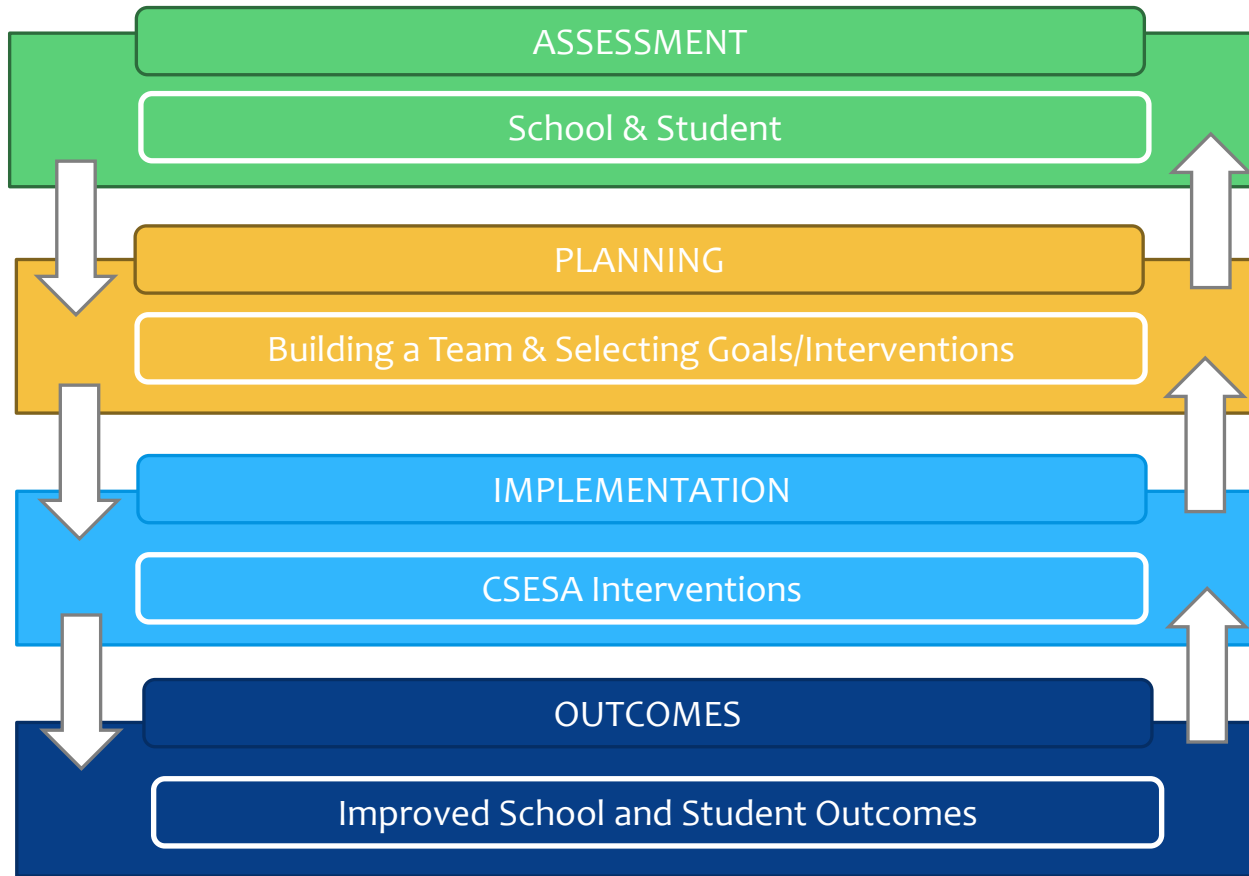
Building a Team & Selecting Goals/Interventions

IMPLEMENTATION

CSESA Interventions

OUTCOMES

Improved School and Student Outcomes



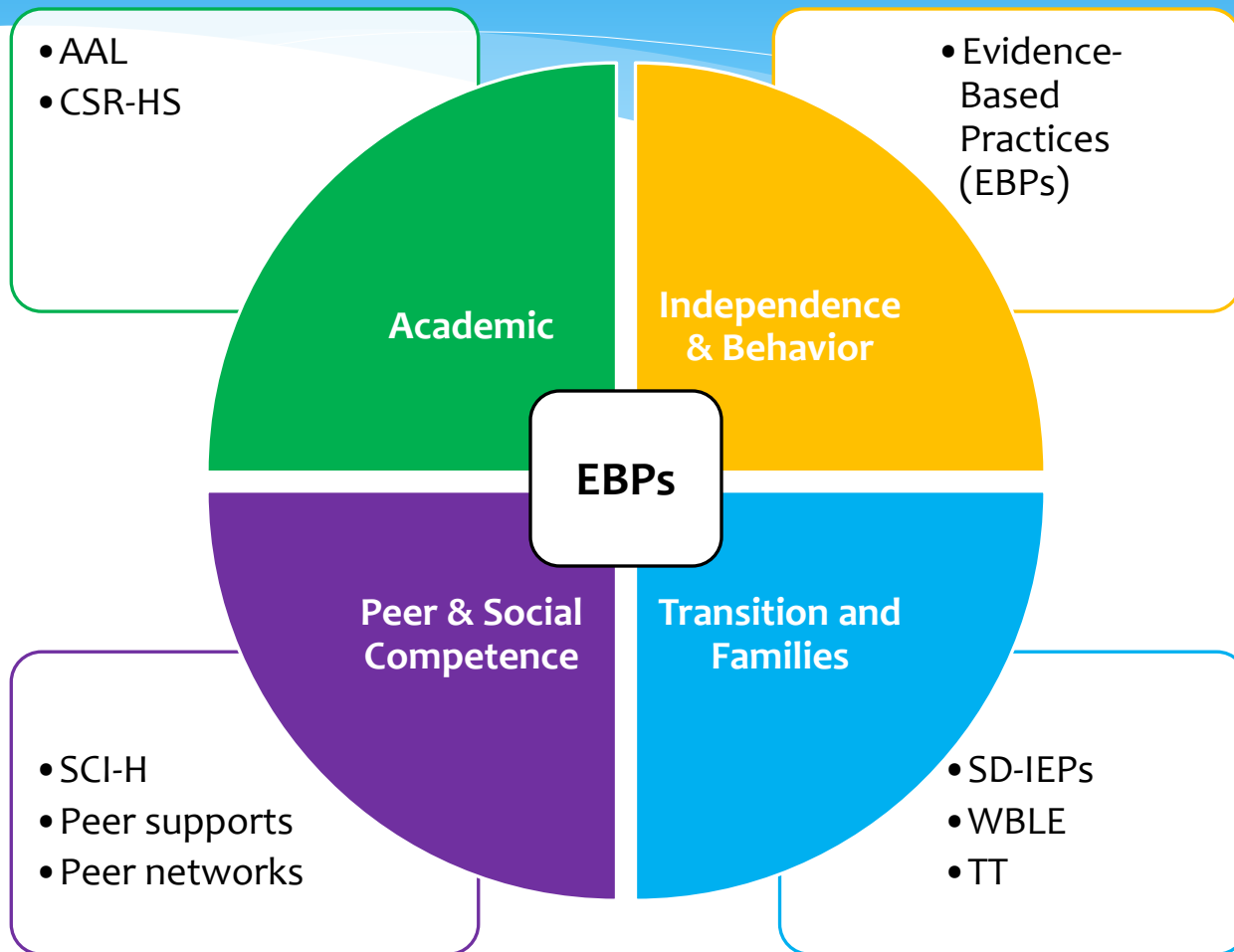
CSESA Domains



CSESA

The Center on Secondary Education for
Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders

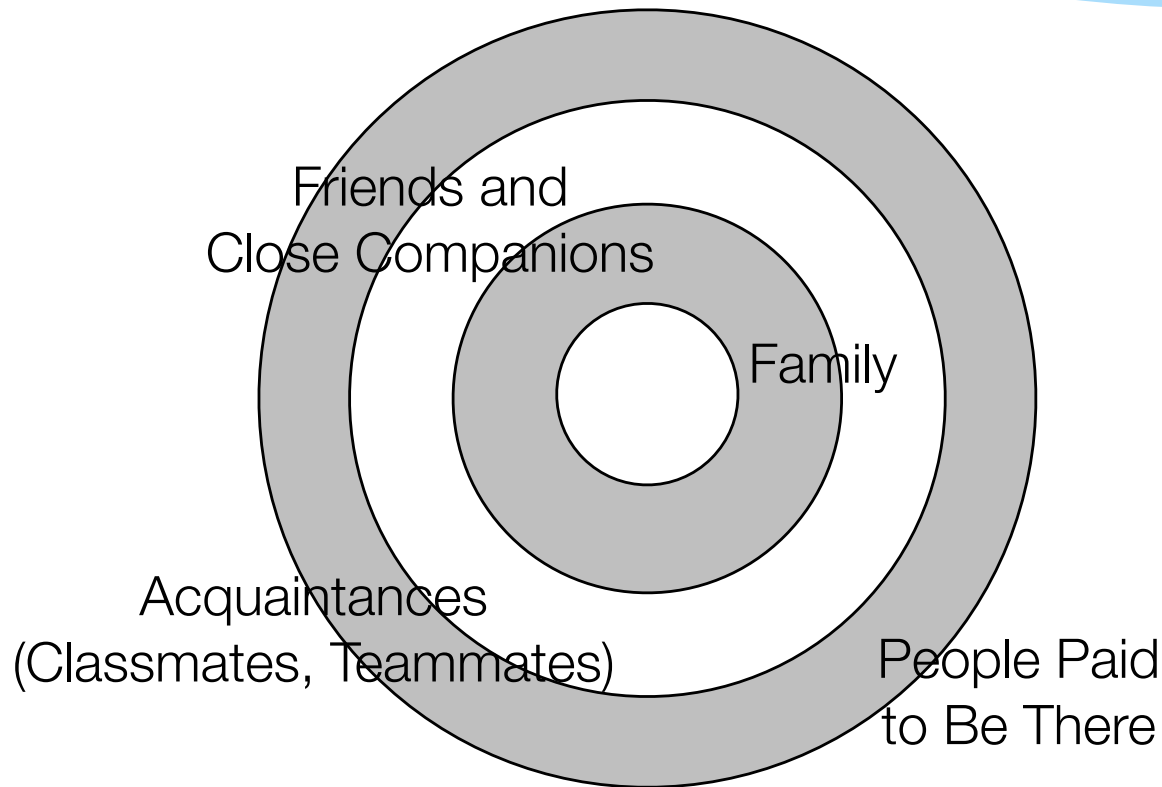
CSESA Interventions



Peer and Social Component

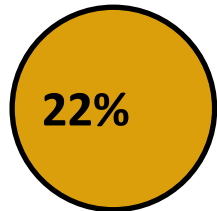


The Relationships of Students

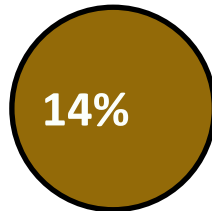


Indicators of Friendships and Peer Relationships During Middle and High School

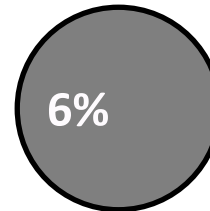
Frequently sees friends outside of school:



Intellectual Disability

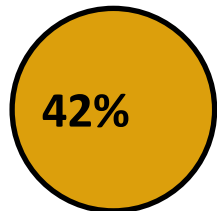


Multiple Disabilities

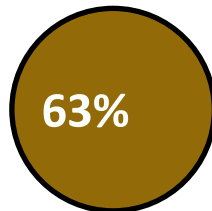


Autism

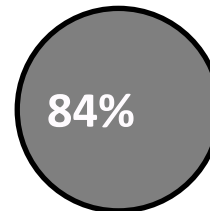
Never or rarely receives phone calls from friends:



Intellectual Disability

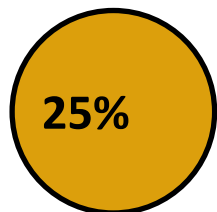


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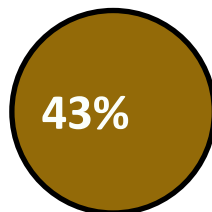


Autism

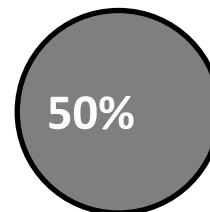
Have NOT been invited to other youth's social activities during the past year:



Intellectual Disability



Multiple Disabilities



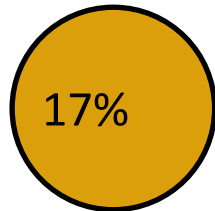
Autism



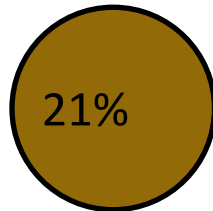
www.nlts2.com

Indicators of Friendships and Peer Relationships During Middle and High School

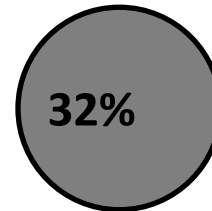
Never **visited with friends** during the previous year:



Intellectual Disability

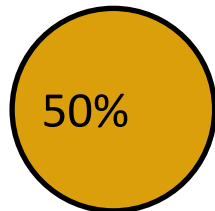


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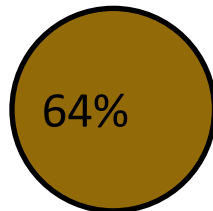


Autism

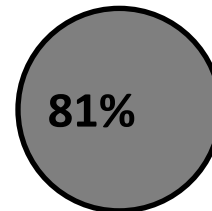
Never or rarely **receive phone calls from friends**:



Intellectual Disability

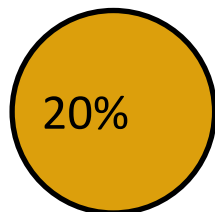


Multiple Disabilities

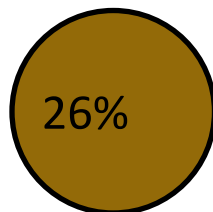


Autism

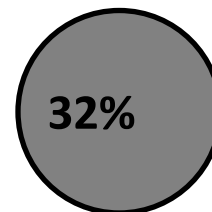
Never **invited to other children's social activities** during the previous year:



Intellectual Disability



Multiple Disabilities



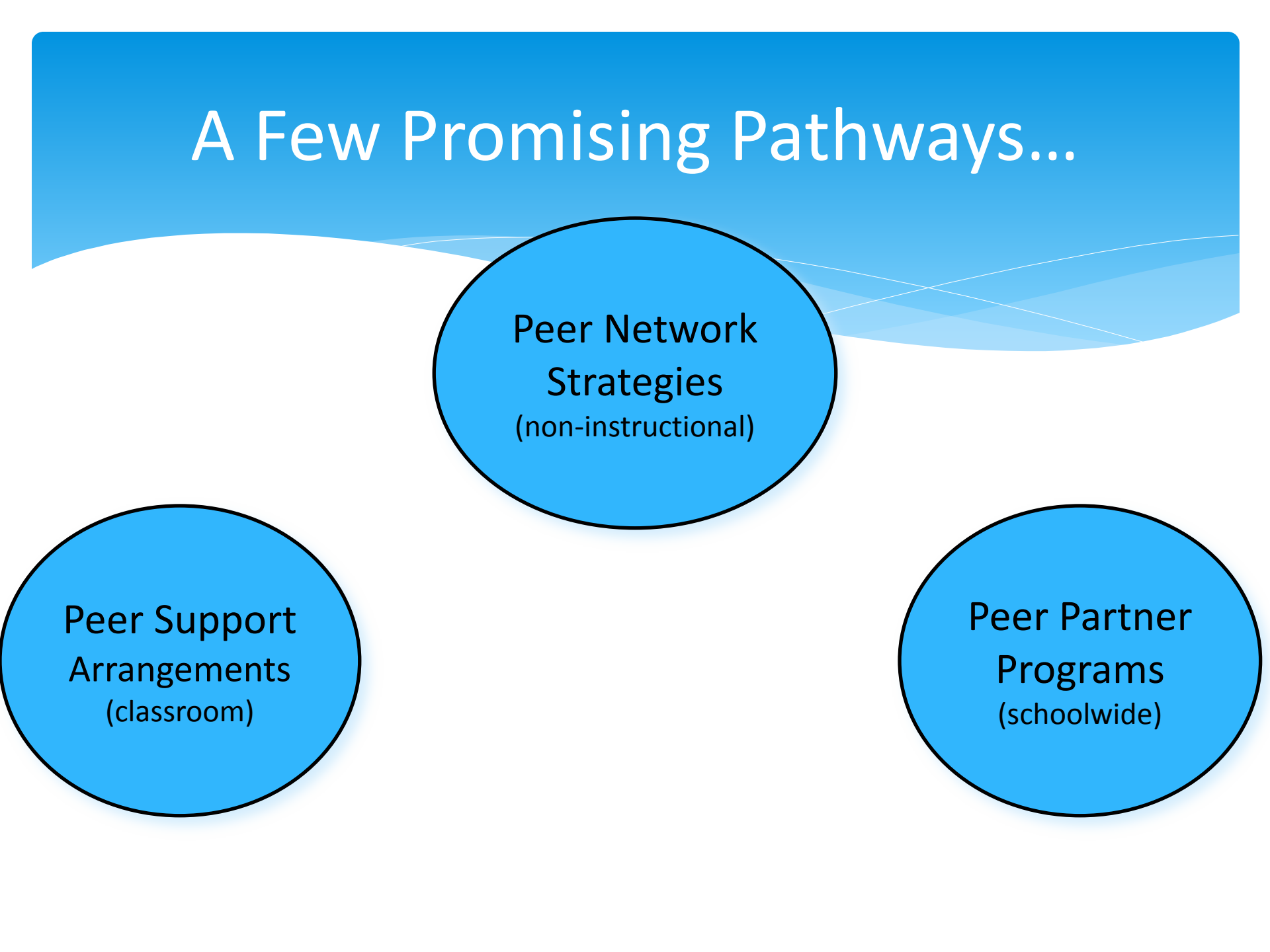
Autism



SEELS

www.seels.net

A Few Promising Pathways...



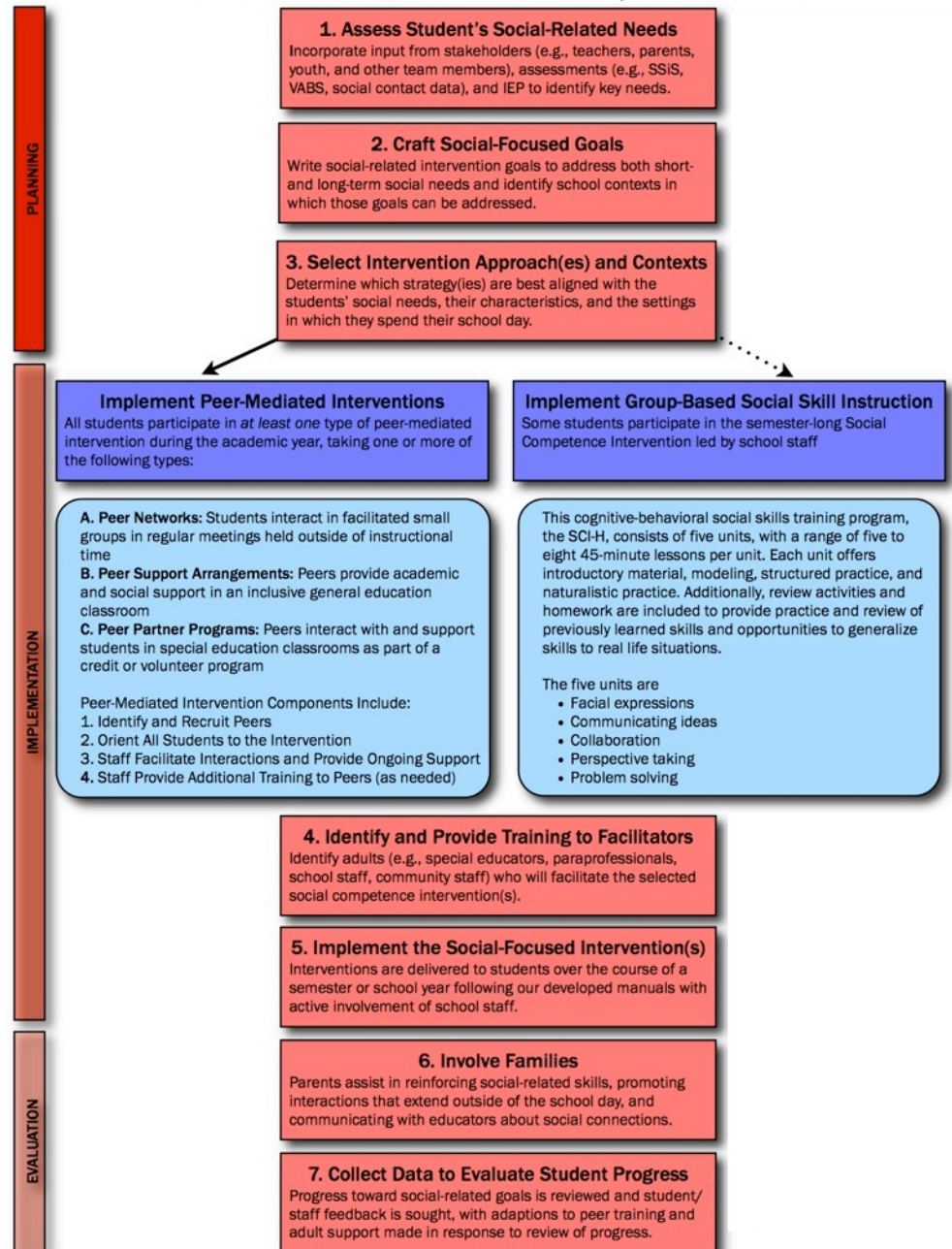
Peer Network
Strategies
(non-instructional)

Peer Support
Arrangements
(classroom)

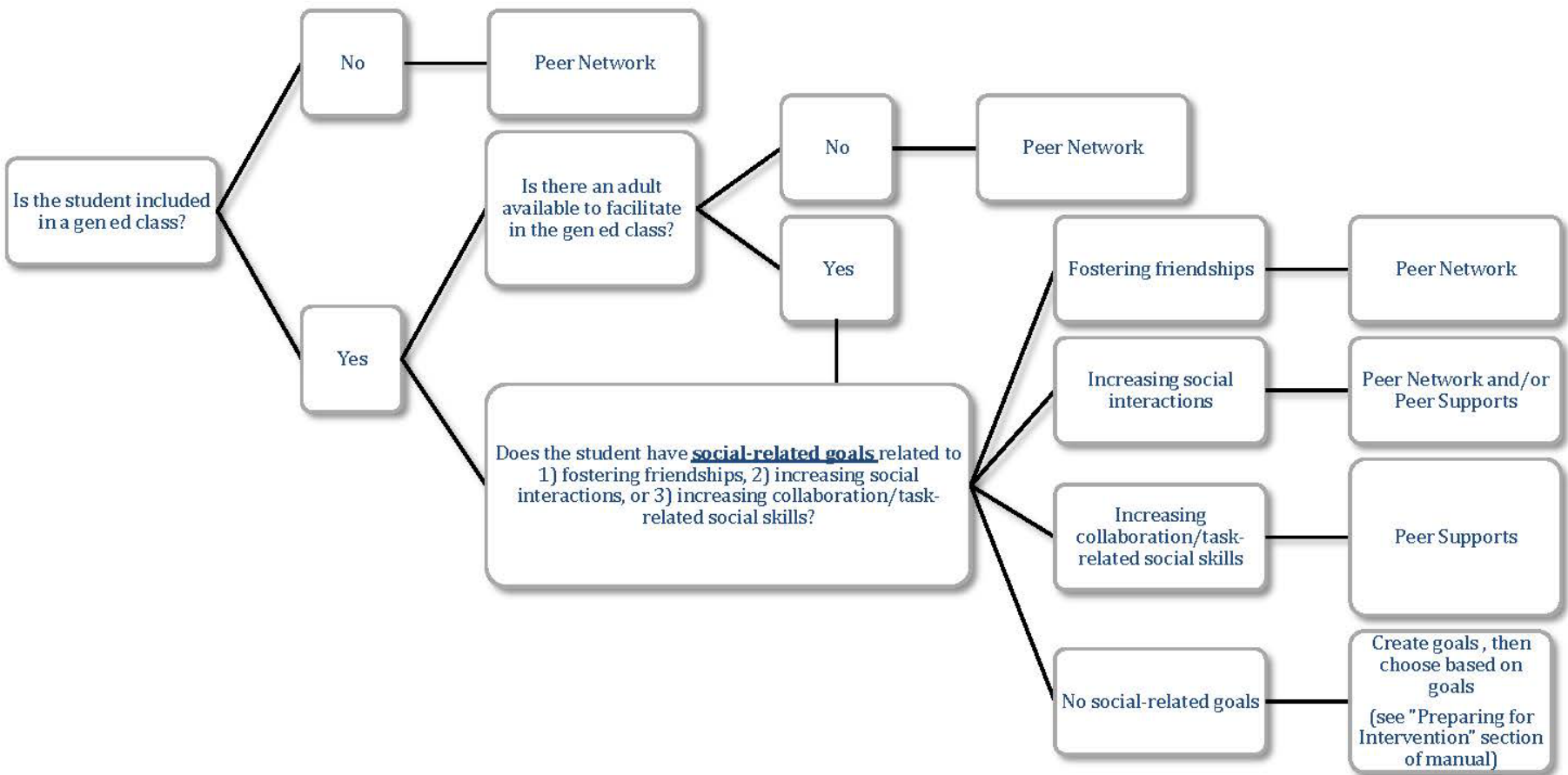
Peer Partner
Programs
(schoolwide)

PASC Model

CSESA Peer and Social Component (PASC)



Peer Network and Peer Support Decision Tree: Matching Student Needs to Intervention



Implementing Peer Network & Support Strategies

1. Identifying student goals and needed supports
2. Selecting and inviting peers
3. Equipping peers for their roles
4. Supporting students as they work and spend time together
5. Reflecting on the process and impact
6. Facilitating relationships beyond the classroom and network

Resources

<http://inclusiveeducationpdresources.com/peer-mentoring/>

<http://www.pattan.net/Videos/Browse/Training%20Series/Starting+Points+and+Possibilities+Promoting+Inclusion+Learning+and+Relationships+for+Students+with+Complex+Needs>

1. Identifying Classroom Expectations and Needed Supports (**Peer Supports**; *in the classroom*)

- * What are the standards informing curricula, instruction, and assessment in this class?
- * What are the expectations general educators hold for all students in this class?
- * What IEP goals will the student work on in this class?
- * How will the student be supported to participate in all of the learning and social opportunities in this class?





Classroom Activities Assessment

Class: _____ Student: _____
Teacher: _____ Team: _____

Typical activities and routines	Expectations for students	Adaptations and supports
Whole-class instruction		
Small-group instruction		
Independent work		

Classroom Activities Assessment

Classroom Activities Assessment

Class: U.S. government/11th grade Student Ramon
 Teacher: Mr. Jakowski Team: Mr. Jakowski, Ms. Souza, and Ms. Rogers

Typical activities and routines	Expectations for students	Adaptations and supports
Whole-class instruction		
Lecture	Students listen, answer questions, and take notes (3x-4x per week).	R will sit in the front of the classroom; peers can share notes; R will follow along with guided notes; teacher and/or peers will ask R clarifying questions.
Current events discussion	Students share info from newspapers, Internet, radio and TV related to current political events covered in class (daily).	As during lecture, R will sit in the front of the classroom.
Watching documentaries	Students complete guided notes created by the teachers; discussion follows (2x per month).	R will complete guided notes adapted to stress main concepts/ideas; R will review what he watched with his peer supports.
Guest speakers	Local and state representatives talk about being a public official; students must research each speaker prior to each talk and prepare questions about current events (3x per semester).	R will research upcoming guest speakers with a peer on the Internet; peers will identify topic ideas for R to search; peers will help R program questions into his AAC device.
Small-group instruction		
Cooperative learning groups	Students review information covered during the week and answer worksheet questions (1x per week).	Adapted questions for R should have two- to three-sentence answers; peers can check sentences to ensure correct spelling and grammar.
Debate teams	Students are asked to research both sides of a current topic and debate the issue in teams (1x per month).	Peers supports can help R enter key arguments into his AAC device for the group; R's role will be to start the debate.
Independent work		
Worksheets	Students use their textbook to answer worksheet questions (2x-3x per week).	R will use guided notes that stress main concepts; he will select correct answers from three multiple choices; peers can assist him when done with their work.

Peer Support Plan

Classroom Activities and Peer Support Brainstorming

Student Goals:

At the beginning of class....

<i>The student could...</i>	<i>The paraprofessional could...</i>	<i>Peers could...</i>

When there are lectures or whole group instruction...

<i>The student could...</i>	<i>The paraprofessional could...</i>	<i>Peers could...</i>

When there are small group or lab activities...

<i>The student could...</i>	<i>The paraprofessional could...</i>	<i>Peers could...</i>

When there is independent seatwork...

<i>The student could...</i>	<i>The paraprofessional could...</i>	<i>Peers could...</i>

When _____...

<i>The student could...</i>	<i>The paraprofessional could...</i>	<i>Peers could...</i>

At the end of class...

<i>The student could...</i>	<i>The paraprofessional could...</i>	<i>Peers could...</i>

Example One of Peer Support Plan

The Biology class is a great place for Brad to work on goals related to developing social and conversational skills, as well as expanding his typing and writing skills. Below are some ideas for how Brad might become more involved in class activities during Biology, as well as some ideas for how the peers at Brad's table could support him.

At the beginning of class....

Brad could...	Peers could...	The facilitator could...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk quietly with his peers (when it is okay with the teacher) • Pass out worksheets or other materials to the class (if there are any that day) • Listen and respond to Ms. Hale do attendance • Boot up his laptop, if he will be taking notes in class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask Brad about his day or upcoming school events • Help Brad pass out any worksheets • Make sure Brad has all of the same materials for class, such as a book, worksheets, lab materials, etc. • Help Brad get out his notebook, pen, paper, etc. for class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to draw some of the peers at the table into conversation with Brad—you may have to do some modeling or give them some ideas of things they could ask about or prompt Brad to ask questions of his peers • Make sure Brad has the same materials as his classmates, such as a book, any worksheets, paper, pencil, lab materials, etc. • Look through the materials quickly to see if there are any things that could be adapted readily

At the beginning of class...

Lectures or whole group instruction...

When there are lectures or whole group instruction...

Brad could...	Peers could...	The facilitator could...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to Ms. Hale as she presents information to the class • Quietly ask his peers questions about the material Ms. Hale is presenting • Take notes by typing important specific key words or phrases that are being written down by a peer (preferably) or the facilitator • Copy by hand those same key words or phrases with the facilitator's help or highlight notes • Turn off/on the lights when Ms. Hale is using the overhead projector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure Brad has all of the same materials for the activity as they do • As you are taking your own notes, copy down on a separate piece of paper some of the important words or ideas from the class discussion; Brad can then type these as his own notes or copy them down with the facilitator's help. Write fairly large so Brad can see clearly. • Periodically check to make sure Brad is doing okay with typing or writing his notes • Occasionally lean over and quietly summarize a key point or interesting fact for Brad, or ask him simple questions that help him follow along • Encourage Brad with lots of positive feedback! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure Brad has the same materials as his classmates • Always brainstorm ways Brad can be engaged in the discussion: Can he answer a question? Can he share an idea? • Help Brad to take modified notes by typing key words/phrases on the laptop (preferred) or writing them out by hand • Encourage Brad to look at Ms. Hale or the whiteboard as instruction is taking place • Let the peers know when they are doing a great job interacting with or supporting Brad • Prompt Brad to ask his peers to double check his notes

When there are small group or lab activities...

Brad could...	Peers could...	The facilitator could...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen to Ms. Hale as she presents instructions to the class• Participate in the small group or lab activity• Ask peers for help doing his part of the activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make sure Brad has all of the same materials for the activity as they do• Give Brad opportunities to make choices about or give input into the activity.• Even if Brad can't do all of an activity, he can probably still do a part of it.• Encourage Brad with lots of positive feedback!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make sure Brad has the same materials as his classmates for the activity• Always brainstorm ways Brad can be engaged—even in small ways—in the activity: Can he mark the group's answers on the worksheet? Can he be asked his opinion about an answer?• Give peers ideas for questions they can ask Brad or ways they can involve him—think creatively!• Let the peers know when they are doing a great job supporting Brad• Give Brad examples of questions he can ask his classmates

Small group or lab activities...

Independent seatwork...

When there is independent seatwork ...		
Brad could...	Peers could...	The facilitator could...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen to Ms. Hale as she presents instructions to the class• Work with the facilitator to finish the worksheet or other activity• When other peers are done, ask them for help doing completing his work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Before beginning your own work, make sure Brad has all of the materials he needs for the activity• When you are finished with your own work, check in to see if Brad could use some help finishing his own work or help double check his answers• Encourage Brad with lots of positive feedback!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make sure Brad has the same materials as his classmates for the activity• Work with Brad on completing the activity in a modified way. Can Brad tell you the answer if you read it to him? If you gave him the answer, could he practice typing or writing it down on the worksheet?• Is there an alternative activity Brad could complete?• Let the peers know when they are doing a great job supporting Brad

At the end of class...

Brad could...	Peers could...	The facilitator could...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk quietly with his peers (if everyone's work is completed)• Collect any materials for Ms. Hale• Put away his things• Shut down his computer if he was taking notes in class	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask Brad about his day, what he is doing after school, or upcoming events• Help Brad put away his things• Walk with Brad to or part way to his next class	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make sure Brad has the same materials as classmates• Try to draw all peers at the table into conversation with Brad—you may have to do a little modeling to get things started

At the end of class...

1. Identifying Student Goals and Needed Supports (Peer Networks; *outside* the classroom)

- * What social-related goals does the student have?
- * Which of those goals will we focus on as part of the peer network?
 - * Does the student interact more successfully with adults than peers?
 - * Does the student initiate interactions?
 - * Does the student use his her communication device?
 - * Are interactions balanced and reciprocal?
 - * Are conversational topics appropriate and engaging?
- * How will the student be supported to participate in his or her peer network?

Selecting and Inviting Peers: Look for Peers Who...

- * Have common time available with the student (peer network) or have the same general education class as the student (peer support)
- * Are interested and excited to participate
- * Have shared interests in common
- * Are motivated to develop an ongoing social relationship with the student
- * Can and will stay involved through the semester or school year
- * Are a positive peer model for the student
- * Other considerations: consistent attendance, existing social networks, similar ages, preferred by the student

Other Issues to Consider

- * Who will approach peers to invite them to be part of the project?
- * What exactly will you say?
- * What commitment are you asking them to make?
- * Whose permission will you require?
- * How will you obtain this permission?
- * How will you respond to questions that arise?
- * Will you require an application or interview?

3. Equipping Peers for Their Roles: Questions to Consider

- * **Who** will lead the orientation session?
- * **When** and **where** will the session be held?
- * **What** topics will be addressed?
- * **Which** students will be encouraged to attend?
- * **How many** students will be trained at once?
- * Other considerations?

The Purpose of the Peer Orientation

- * Students (and adults) learn more about each other
- * Discuss goals
- * Ask questions
- * Share ideas for increasing interaction with one another
- * Clarify academic expectations (peer support)
- * Determine when interaction could occur elsewhere during the school week (peer network)
- * Establish a regular meeting time during lunch period or another specified time (peer network)

Example Peer Orientation Session

- * Introductions/icebreaker
- * Rationale for peer-mediated strategies
- * Background about the student
- * General goals in the class, club, or other activity
- * Confidentiality and respectful language
- * Expectations specific to the classroom or elsewhere
- * Technology and communication systems
- * Basic instructional and support strategies (peer support)
- * Student motivation and feedback
- * Inappropriate behavior of peer supports or student with disabilities
- * When to seek assistance
- * Questions
- * Scheduling



Specific to Peer Supports...

- * How will the team communicate about future lessons?
- * Who will adapt materials?
- * Who will collect data on IEP goals?
- * Who will model support strategies?

Peer Network Orientation Checklist

Focus Student: _____
Facilitator: _____

School: _____
Date: _____

Peer Partners Present: _____

Circle Y (yes) or N (no) based on whether the following occurred:

1. Y N Was the student with a disability present?
 2. Y N Were all of the network members in attendance? List names of partners who were present.
 3. Y N Did the partners and student introduce themselves and participate in introductory activities appropriately (if student is mostly nonverbal, did I introduce him or her to the group and give non-confidential background information?)?
 4. Y N Did students talk about areas of shared interests?
 5. Y N Did the group discuss the goals for the group? List any goals suggested by group members:
 6. Y N Did the group discuss ways to work toward the goals of the peer network?
 7. Y N Did I discuss the importance of confidentiality and respectful language with the group?
 8. Y N Did the group talk about when social interactions can occur?
 9. Y N Did I offer specific suggestions on ways to interact socially?
 10. Y N Did the group schedule regular meetings or discuss the date of the next meeting?
- ☐ Questions or concerns raised by peers (list below):

Peer Support Orientation Checklist

Focus Student: _____
Facilitator: _____

School: _____
Date: _____

Peer Partners Present: _____

Topics covered:

- ☐ Rationale for peer supports strategies
 - ☐ Background about focus student
 - ☐ General goals
 - ☐ Confidentiality and respectful language
 - ☐ Expectations specific to the classroom (drawing from a written Peer Support Plan)
 - ☐ Peer support strategies relevant to the student, including communication system (if applicable), promoting class participation, promoting interactions with classmates and student motivation and feedback
 - ☐ Guidance on when to seek assistance from educators or paraprofessionals
 - ☐ Additional roles and responsibilities for peer support (list below):
- ☐ Questions or concerns raised by peer supports (list below):

4. Supporting students as they work and spend time together (Peer Supports; *inside* the classroom)

- * Ensure content is modified appropriately for student with disability
- * Encourage the student and peers to have regular attendance
- * Check in with the students and answer any questions
- * After each class, reflect and make adjustments as needed
- * Complete the Peer Support Weekly Checklist (optional)
- * Provide feedback to the peers and student outside of class

4. Supporting students as they work and spend time together (Peer Networks; *outside* the classroom)

- * Ensure an appropriate activity is planned
- * Encourage the student and peers to attend meetings
- * Be present during meetings and ensure everyone is included and participating
- * Check in with the group and answer any questions
- * Encourage members to connect with each other outside of the meetings
- * After each meeting, reflect and make adjustments as needed
- * Complete the Peer Network Weekly Checklist (optional)
- * Provide feedback to the peers and student outside of the meeting

Peer Support Weekly Checklist

Student: _____ School: _____
Facilitator: _____ Date: _____

Peer Partners Present: _____

Circle Y (yes) or N (no) based on whether or not these behaviors occurred during the class.
Try to complete about once a week.

1. Y N Are peer supports in close proximity to the student during class?
Y N Do the students sit next to each other?
N/A Y N Do the students remain in close proximity during out-of-seat class activities?
N/A Y N During group activities, do the students join the same group?
2. Y N Are peer supports interacting with the student in class?
Y N Do they greet the student (e.g. "Hi" or "see you later")?
Y N Do students engage in other conversations?
Y N Do peer supports include the focus student in interactions with other peers?
3. Y N Are peer supports assisting the focus student academically?
Y N Do the peer supports help the student participate in class activities?
Y N Do peer supports repeat or rephrase instructions for the student?
Y N Are peer supports appropriately prompting the focus student?
Y N Do peer supports provide appropriate feedback to the focus student?
Y N Do students work together on classroom activities?
Y N Do students share work materials?
4. Y N Are you (facilitator) supporting peer supports and the target student?
Y N Do you facilitate interactions during class when appropriate?
Y N Do you provide reminders/feedback to peer supports before, during, or after class?
Y N Do you provide praise and feedback to students during or outside of class?

What feedback have you given—or will you give—to peer supports?

What support do you need from other staff to support these students well?

Peer Network Weekly Checklist

Student: _____ School: _____
Facilitator: _____ Date: _____

Peer Partners Present: _____

Circle Y (yes) or N (no) based on whether or not these behaviors occurred during the meeting.

☐ Y ☐ N 1. Are peer partners and the student interacting during the meeting?

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| Y | N | Did the student stay for the majority of the meeting? |
| Y | N | Does the student initiate interactions with partners? |
| Y | N | Do partners initiate interactions with the student? |
| Y | N | Do students engage in a game or activity together? |
| Y | N | Do students engage in conversation together? |
| Y | N | Was targeted social-related goal(s) addressed? |

☐ Y ☐ N 2. Are you (facilitator) supporting partners and the student?

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| Y | N | Do you provide structure and facilitate the meetings as needed? |
| Y | N | Do you monitor interactions during the meeting? |
| Y | N | Do you provide praise and feedback to students during the meeting? |
| Y | N | Did you discuss the date of the next meeting? |
| Y | N | Did you discuss the activity for the next meeting? |

☐ Y ☐ N 3. Are peer partners and the student getting together outside of the meetings?

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| Y | N | Does the student ever initiate interactions outside of the meeting? |
| Y | N | Do partners initiate interactions outside of the meeting? |

What feedback have you given—or will you give—to the peers?

What support do you need from other staff to support these students well?

Selecting Activities for Peer Networks

- * Be age-appropriate (e.g., instead of coloring cartoons, make posters for events)
- * Be interesting to *all* members of the network and can possibly include the student's "perseverative" interests if appropriate
- * Have a (valued) role for everyone
- * Provide multiple opportunities for interaction
- * Allow interaction modes that are appropriate for the student (e.g., a game that is entirely verbal would not be appropriate for a nonverbal student)
- * Be practical to implement in the location and amount of time the group meets

What Training Will You Provide to Facilitators?

- Identify adults (e.g. special educators, paraprofessionals, school staff, community staff) who will facilitate the networks and peer supports.
- Facilitators should know the student(s) well, have the time to implement the intervention, and ideally, know other students in the school who might participate as partners.
- Groups can have co-facilitators if desired.

Using the “Least Intrusive” Support that “Works”

Can the student do it...

- * ...on his or her own?
- * ...if given the right technology or adaptive equipment?
- * ...if provided with some additional skill instruction?
- * ...if shown how to use basic self-management strategies?
- * ...with help from a peer, classmate, or co-worker?
- * ...with *occasional help* from a special educator, job coach, service provider, or other paid staff?
- * ...with *ongoing help* from a special educator, job coach, service provider, or other paid staff?



LEAST

A Few Great Articles on Facilitating Interaction

<http://www.uvm.edu/~cdci/?Page=parasupport/chrono.html>

<http://tcx.sagepub.com/>

How Might You Capture These Changes?

For whom?

[students with disabilities,
peers, other students,
educators, paraprofessionals,
facilitators, parents, others]

Using what
approaches?

[observations, interviews,
questionnaires, other]

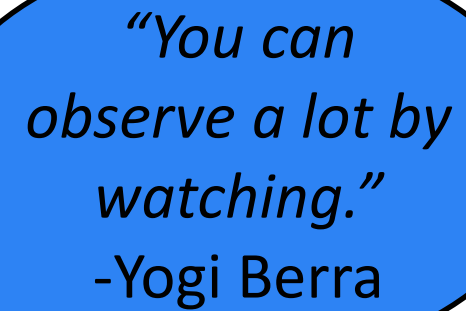
With whose help?

Our CSESA Pilot Studies

- * 3 studies
 - * Peer networks in the cafeteria (4 students)
 - * Peer networks in an advisory class (2 students)
 - * Peer support arrangements in inclusive classrooms (4 students across 3 states)
- * All high school males with ASD
- * 1-4 peers partners per group (students without similar disabilities)

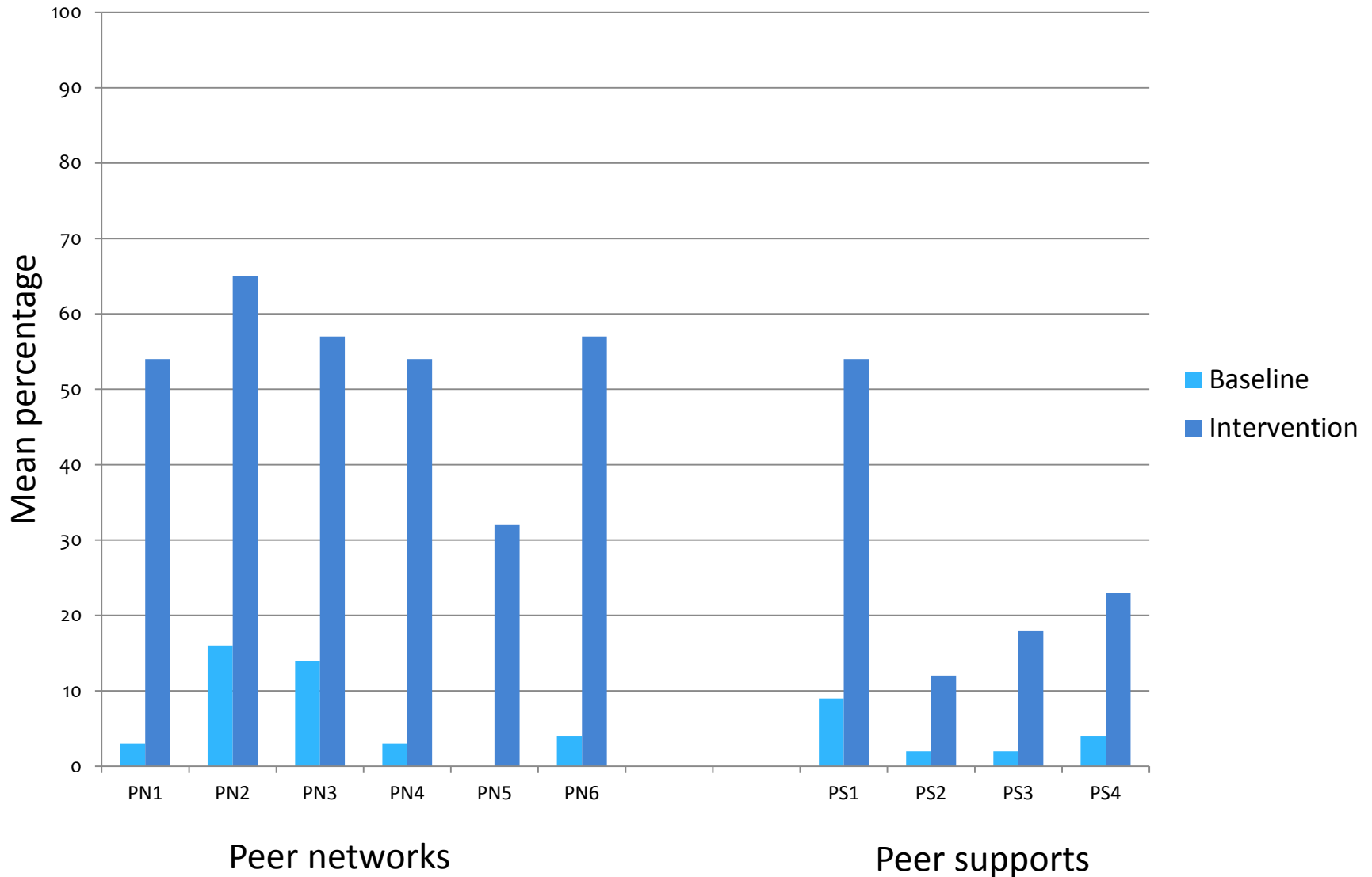
Classroom and Network Observations

- * Nature of students' interactions with peers
- * Types of conversational skills demonstrated
- * Modes of communication used
- * Persons involved in interactions
- * Time in which students are engaged academically
- * Time in which students are working with a one-to-one adult support



*"You can
observe a lot by
watching."*
-Yogi Berra

Increases in Peer Interactions



Conversations with Students with Disabilities

- * Are you enjoying spending time with _____? Why or why not?
- * What are some of the things you do together?
- * What help do you find most helpful? Least helpful?
- * What have you learned from working with _____?
- * Do you consider _____ to be a friend?
- * Would you like to continue working/spending time with _____? Why or why not?

Student Feedback Form

Student: _____ Classroom: _____ Semester: _____

Please read each of the following questions to the student with disabilities who had a peer network. Circle the answer that best reflects their response. Add any notes below if the student elaborates on their response.

1. Do you like going to school? Yes No Unsure Unclear

Comments:

2. Do you have friends at school? Yes No Unsure Unclear

Comments:

3. Did you spend time with [names of peer partners]? Yes No Unsure Unclear

If yes, what did you do?

4. Did you like spending time with _____ [names of peer partners] in school? Yes No Unsure Unclear

Comments:

5. Did spending time with _____ [names of peer partners] help you learn new things? Yes No Unsure Unclear

Comments:

6. Are _____ [names of peer partners] your friends? Yes No Unsure Unclear

Comments:

7. Would you like to keep hanging out with _____ [names of peer partners]? Yes No Unsure Unclear

Comments:

Circle "unsure" if the student communicates he or she is not certain of the answer. Circle "unclear" if the student cannot communicate his or her perspective.

An alternate set of questions are included on the next page.

1. What did you like about spending time with your peer partners?

2. What did you not like about spending time with your peer partners?

3. Would you like to continue spending time with your peer partners?

4. Have you made new friends? Who?

5. What other types of support would you like to receive?

6. What other school activities would you like to be part of?

7. Are there other students in the school you would like to get to know?

Other Comments or Feedback:

Please return to _____ by _____.

Conversations with Peer Partners

- * How would you describe your experiences?
- * Did you enjoy serving in this role? In what ways?
- * What things have been going really well? Not so well?
- * In what ways have you benefited from this involvement?
- * What changes have you noticed in your partner, if any?
- * Has this been a beneficial experience for your partner?
- * What additional help would you like to be effective in this role?

Peer Partner Feedback Form

Student: _____ Classroom: _____ Semester: _____

We want to know your thoughts about being part of a student's peer network. Please read each of the following statements and **circle** the answer that best reflects your views.

1. I felt confident being a peer partner.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
2. I had enough help from a teacher or teaching assistant (i.e., paraprofessional) to do this role well.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
3. This was too much work for me.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
4. My partner benefited <i>socially</i> from spending time with peers (e.g., talks more with peers, has more friends).	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
5. My partner with disabilities benefited <i>in other ways</i> from spending time with peers (e.g., learns new skills).	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
6. I benefitted <i>socially</i> from being a peer partner.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
7. I benefitted <i>in other ways</i> from being a peer partner.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
8. I consider my partner with disabilities to be a friend.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
9. Other students at our school should also do this.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
10. I would do this again in the future.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

1. What aspects of being a peer partner have you enjoyed the most?
2. What have you found to be most surprising or challenging part of this experience?
3. What have you learned about yourself—or about others—from this experience?
4. In what ways have you seen your partner benefit from being part of this experience?

5. What advice would you have for other students in your school who might be thinking about becoming a peer partner?

6. How can school staff better support you in this role?

7. What questions do you still have?

Other Comments or Feedback:

Please return to _____ by _____.

Conversations with Educators & Facilitators

- * What is your overall impression of the strategies?
- * How would you describe the experiences of students?
- * How effective have peers been at providing support?
- * What strategies do these peers still need to learn?
- * What concerns (if any) do you still have?
- * What sort of assistance would be most helpful for you?
- * What have been the benefits to students with disabilities? To their peer partners? To other students? To school staff?

What Participants Told Us

* Student with ASD

- * “I believe I’m feeling a little more social.”
- * “We should of had more than one day a week.”

* Peer

- * “The networks help[ed] me see that at times not everybody has the same point-of-view on different matters.”
- * “I've been able to communicate better with the kids, but also with other people.”
- * “My eyes are more open to my partner’s needs.”

* Facilitator

- * “The student wants to make friends.”
- * “The student talks a lot about his peer buddies.”
- * “The peer partners learned more about special needs and their own compassion.”

Conversations with Parents

- * What does your child tell you about working with his or her peers this semester?
- * What have you noticed that suggests your child is enjoying this experience?
- * Does your child describe his or her peers as friends?
- * Is your child connecting with his peers outside of school, by phone, e-mail, or in person?

6. Facilitating relationships beyond the classroom and network

- * Check in regularly with students
- * Involve families appropriately
- * Create opportunities for students to see each other outside of the network and classroom, and encourage other educators and staff to do the same

Key Findings and Lessons Learned

- * Peer networks and peer supports are a relatively easy (and inexpensive) way to address social- and academic-related support needs of adolescents with ASD
- * Students with and without ASD benefit socially from participating in peer-mediated arrangements
- * Peer-mediated arrangements substantially increase social engagement and foster social connections

For more information:

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